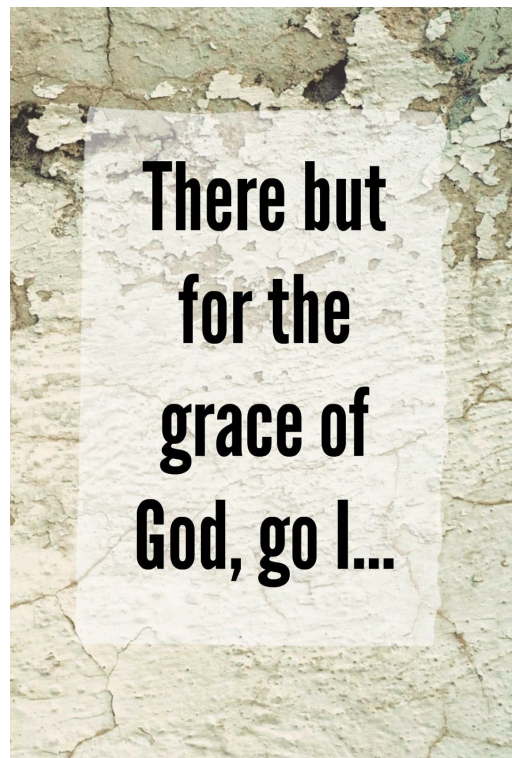


There but for the Grace of God...

Our scripture readings for this [Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) are filled with great challenges that we need to be very attentive to in our current milieu, whether we are discussing issues and events which are focused nationally or globally. Or whether we are dealing with issues and concerns within our church and religious experience. We appear to be a society that is growing ever more impatient, entrenched and embattled in our own beliefs and options, non-trusting and judgmental of those who don't agree with us. Tribalism is arising!

Yet, we who embrace the gospel and the Franciscan way of life, are called to rise above these tribal attitudes, especially if we are to live our call to embrace all people as our sisters and brothers. How do we live and witness as instruments of God's love and peace in our current milieu? I believe an honest response to this question is – only by the grace of God!



Let's take the example in the reading from the Book of Samuel. King Saul and his son-in-law David had a very contentious relationship. This contentiousness had been growing steadily, especially through the anger, jealousy, pride, and dishonesty of King Saul. David eventually fled and went into hiding. In this reading, King Saul and his army are on the hunt for David. However, one evening as Saul and his men slept, David and his aide Abishai walked among the sleeping troops. Abishai tried to convince David to let him kill Saul, "God has delivered your enemy into your grasp this day. Let me nail him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I will not need a second thrust!" But David said, "Do not harm him, for who can lay hands on the Lord's anointed and remain unpunished?" So David simply took the spear and the water jug from the place where Saul slept and they got away. Had David's heart been filled with malice, hatred, and a desire for revenge it would have been easy for him to give the order to kill King Saul.

Likewise, we must listen deeply and take the gospel message to heart. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." If we are to be true followers of Christ, Eucharistic people, then our very lives must be centered in the love that Jesus proclaimed. We cannot have it both ways. Peace, non-violence, and love rooted in Christ must be the means by which we have the courage to stand in silent resistance when someone strikes us on the cheek or calls out profanities against us.

The confrontation last month, which took place on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. is a good example of how hateful provocation and harassment only leads to

greater baiting, goading, and rising vexation. Fortunately, this incident did not lead to physical violence but the hateful rhetoric in the words and the body language of both the people identified as Hebrew Israelites and the students from the Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky was extremely disturbing.

Perhaps it was by the grace of God that Native American elder, Nathan Phillips, had the courage to step forward, place himself in the midst of the conflict and beat his drum. After the encounter Nathan Phillips spoke of the hatred and racism that was so visible and palpable in the crowd. He also mentioned the “push” arising from within him to use his Native American drum and to use prayer to bring a balance and a calm to the situation. Phillips stated, “I didn’t assume that I had any kind of power to do that, but at the same time, I didn’t feel that I could just stand there anymore and not do something.”

May we learn a great lesson from this Native American elder and be attentive to the “push” of God’s Spirit. May our lives rooted in the gospel impel us to seek the grace of God and step-up in prayerful non-violence to be instruments of peace, non-judgment, and prayer.

Margaret Magee, OSF
FAN Board President

Suggested Action:

This week, spend time in peaceful silence while contemplating the Gospel passage for this Sunday. Be attentive to a word or phrase that pops out to you and ask God what He is calling you to do in your life in response.

Suggested Petitions:

May we all be attentive to the “push” of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. We pray...
May our faith in the gospel give us the courage to be instruments of peace and non-judgment.
We pray...

Collect Prayer

**Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, always pondering spiritual things,
we may carry out in both word and deed
that which is pleasing to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Amen

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| <p>Take Action: Sign your Name to Tell Congress we Need a Green New Deal</p> |
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We're running out of time to tackle the climate crisis. The clock is ticking as more and more communities face catastrophic wildfires, droughts, and storms. We urgently need bold, unprecedented action to tackle the twin crises of climate change and inequality. We need to mobilize vast public resources to transition from an economy built on exploitation and fossil fuels to one driven by dignified work and clean energy. We need a [Green New Deal](#).



A [Green New Deal](#) would simultaneously tackle the climate crisis, create millions of high-paying jobs, and counteract racial and economic inequity. It would revitalize our infrastructure, retro-fit our buildings, revive clean manufacturing, and restore our ecosystems - delivering clean air and water, good jobs, and climate stability to those who've borne the brunt of the fossil fuel economy. [Sign on to tell Congress we need this Green New Deal](#).

The Green New Deal just took an *enormous step forward*: Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey just introduced [resolutions](#) to support a Green New Deal in the House and the Senate, which lays out a 10-year plan to mobilize every aspect of American society to achieve 100% clean and renewable energy by 2030, a guaranteed living-wage job for anybody who needs one, and a just transition for both workers and frontline communities.

FAN was contacted by Sister of St. Francis in Denver and climate activist, Elizabeth Fuhr, OSF urging [support of the Green New Deal](#). Sr. Elizabeth calls the resolution a "framework to mobilize the transition in the US from fossil fuel to renewables in a just and equitable way that provides good jobs and a livable planet." We couldn't agree more. We urge our members and friends to [add your name in support of a Green New Deal](#).

FAN Board Member Attends World Youth Day in Panama

FAN board member and Secular Franciscan, Kelly Moltzen was in attendance at an international Franciscan gathering just prior to World Youth Day. She offered us this great [reflection of her time in Panama](#) which we encourage you to read and share.

Kelly is an alumna of Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries in Garrison, NY and was professed into the Secular Franciscan Order in October 2018. She works in the field of nutrition and public health, and has served on the board of FAN since 2014.

She continues to be an advocate of the work that was started at FAN to engage youth in



social and ecological justice, Franciscan spirituality, and community living through the Franciscan Earth Corps. Kelly is also a co-covener of an emerging Interfaith Public Health Network, where she is seeking to align efforts together with the NYC Franciscan Solidarity Table which she helps to convene.

FAN Staff Join Hundreds at White House Rally in Support of Permanent Solution for TPS Holders

On Tuesday, February 12th, [hundreds of TPS recipients](#) gathered in rain and cold at the White House, then marched to the Capitol to demand permanent residency. Thousands of people from multiple countries have fled from violent conflicts and major disasters and were given Temporary Protected Status in the U.S. where they have built lives for their families and have made this country home. Now they are in limbo under threats of deportation by this Administration and urge Congress to grant them permanent residency.

Allies who joined them at the White House included FAN staff members, Sisters Maria and Marie. A member of their community, Sr. Maureen Duignan, director of East Bay Sanctuary in Oakland, CA visited a number of Congressional offices with TPS recipients.



New Lenten Resource: 40 Days; 40 Ways A Guide to A Green Lent

As Franciscans, we consistently examine our relational understanding of creation. Looking to theologians like St. Bonaventure who developed a theological and spiritual vision that acknowledged all creation as emanating from the goodness of God, existing as a "footprint" of God, and leading us back to God if we are able to "read" nature properly.

As we approach the solemn season of Lent, during which we prepare our lives and souls for the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus, FAN would like to offer our members a new resource. In order to assist you in your "reading" of nature, we offer you this guide, [40 Days; 40 Ways: A Guide to a Green Lent](#), by Dianne Scheper.

40 Days; 40 Ways A Guide to a Green Lent



Despite its title, "[40 Days; 40 Ways](#)" is not fashioned as a daily devotional. Dianne describes it as "a range of suggestions for merging your Lenten disciplinary spirit with creation-centered activities." We hope you will consider challenging yourself with some creative action this Lent.

Additionally, the Global Catholic Climate Movement last week sent out a beautiful [commemoration](#) of the life of Sr. Dorothy Stang SNDdeN, activist and "Martyr of the Amazon." We encourage you to [read and share this resource](#).

Franciscan Action Network 2018 Annual Report

The Franciscan Action Network (FAN) is proud to share news of the past year's successes in our [2018 Annual Report](#). We encourage all of our Institutional and individual members and other members of the Franciscan family to take a moment to read through it as it shares information about the important work that our staff and Board do to foster future success.



Risking arrest, caring for the climate, advocating for equality, justice, and human dignity for 10 years

At FAN, our distinctly Franciscan identity is the basis of our foundation. We keep this in mind as we build and grow relationships and look toward sustaining our Franciscan voice, both in D.C. and across the country, well into the future.

We are constantly aware that without the prayers and financial support of all our members, we would not have grown as much as we have in the last 10 years. We will work hard to continually bring the spirituality and charism of the Franciscan family to those on Capitol Hill. We hope you will continue to partner with us, through your prayers, financial contribution, and activism.

Save the Date: GCCM Divestment Event March 15th

The [Global Catholic Climate Movement](#) will convene a conference in Washington on Catholic fossil fuels divestment, to discuss the practical implications of the Church's teaching and of the climate crisis for US Catholic institutions investment practices. The event will take place in Washington D.C., on March 15, 2019.

Conference: "Catholic Divestment: A Prophetic Stand for Our Common Home"

Venue: Washington D.C., United States (exact location to be defined)

Date: March 15, 2019

Registration: <https://bit.ly/2WS1Rth>

Contact: daniela@catholicclimatemovement.global



The Global Catholic
Climate Movement

Join this enriching conversation on implementing the Church's teaching on the climate crisis in the US Catholic institutions' investment practices.

Take Part Online: SNAP Webinar and Digital Toolkit

On February 1st, the Trump Administration posted a notice for proposed rule making through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to restrict states' flexibility to provide vital nutrition support to people who struggle to feed themselves and their families. This new attack against the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is an attempt to circumvent congressional intent as laid out in the recently-passed bipartisan Farm Bill reauthorization, and it could not be more out of touch with the reality of struggling American workers.



In response, the [Interreligious Working Group on Domestic Human Needs](#) (DHN) will host a webinar next **Wednesday, February 20 at 3pm EST** on how to submit comments to USDA on this critically important issue. Attendees will learn more about this issue and how they can get involved. Please **RSVP at bit.ly/Faith4SNAP and forward to your networks.**

Additionally, the working group has put together an [interfaith toolkit](#) with talking points, sample comments, faith leader quotes, scriptural passages, sample social media posts, and more. Please take a moment to circulate the materials to anyone who is interested in taking action.

Interfaith Delegation Plans Another Honduras trip

FAN's own Sr. Maria Orlandini will again join in another interfaith delegation to Honduras next month.

The group continues the [work started last spring](#) in working with organizations addressing the root causes of migration from the area. Plans for the pilgrimage include accompaniment of targeted Honduran communities, a cultural concert, and multiple solidarity actions.



Please keep Sr. Maria and all the delegates in your prayers. There is discussion of starting a fund raising campaign whose proceeds will help the Honduran people continue to resist their authoritarian government. We will keep you posted if this comes to being.

Take Action: Call or Write your Members of Congress to Support H.R.8

One of the first pieces of gun violence prevention legislation up in the House of Representatives is H.R. 8. This bill is "To require a background check for every firearm sale" as well as other safeguards which turn ordinary gun loans into felonies, ban handguns for young adults,



and authorizes unlimited fees.

Right now, the National Rifle Association is sending messages urging people to call their members of Congress to oppose this legislation. **We must make our voices heard.** This is a positive step towards common sense gun safety for the common good.

This week is a recess week when elected officials are home in their districts. Check this [list of town halls](#) and be sure to attend if there is one scheduled in your area. We also urge you to call or send an email to your Representative. Find [contact information on all elected Representatives here](#).